



# Finding Balance in Our Identity\*

By Coreen Jander

## Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, open our eyes today and let us see clearly our identity as Your beloved children. Let Your truth be our guide. Push away the darkness of sin and the lies we believe. Be our light in this dark world. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

What happens to us when we trust in one another or in ourselves? \_\_\_\_\_

How might the life description in **Jeremiah 17:5-6** appear if applied to your life right now? \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways could your heart be deceiving you about the motives behind your behaviors or thoughts? \_\_\_\_\_

In **Genesis 41** there is a story about the most powerful man in Egypt at the time. This Pharaoh had some troubling dreams and his response to those is in verse 8. Let's read that together.

This story reveals a common problem throughout generations. Everybody has a "go to." When in a troubling situation, instead of first turning to the Lord for help, we turn to other people and things.

Who is your "go to"? A family member, favorite blog writer, expert in a specific field? \_\_\_\_\_

Perhaps is it a "what" — a philosophy, political viewpoint, or role. Discuss our earthly "go tos." \_\_\_\_\_

How does turning to and trusting in our "go to" impact what we believe about ourselves? \_\_\_\_\_

My brothers were my "go to" for many years. I was a little sister and a big sister until I was in my mid-thirties, and then, unexpectedly, I was no longer a sister. Both my older and younger brothers passed away in less than nine months of each other and, after I began to see through the cloud of initial grief, I realized my cherished role as little and big sister was over. In my journal I wrote that "I felt less of me without my brothers in my life." I could not sort out in my heart how I could exist without them or without my role in their lives. I then wrote to myself these words, "I must speak truth into myself, for I know God would not have allowed them to leave me if I would be a fraction of myself without them."

**D**o you ever have moments when you realize the woman you are is not the woman you intended to become? Do you ever wonder why you add to the high expectations of the American standard by creating new standards for yourself? For example, providing for my children is now not enough for me to feel satisfied. I am not a proper mother if I don't grow food in my yard with the compost I made from my organic vegetables and water it with collected water from my rain barrel. Whether small or great, there are so many life issues that drive me to wonder if who I am supposed to be in this life has become foggy.

When the lies we believe, culture's imposition, or the mistakes we've made, guide our thoughts and actions, our identities become imbalanced. If we don't know who we are in the eyes of God and that truth does not guide us every day, we are vulnerable to believing falsehoods about who we should be.

*\*BALANCE BIBLE STUDY Christ Filled Family Living, by Coreen Jander. Available at [www.lwml.org/store](http://www.lwml.org/store).*

*Coreen Jander received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education and Director of Christian Education, and her Master of Arts degree in Professional Counseling, from Concordia University Chicago. She is a licensed professional counselor, maintaining her own practice. Coreen is a home educator; counselor for individuals, couples, and group therapies; facilitator for psycho-educational workshops; and is active in training leaders for new small group ministry.*

We have many roles in this life. We do many things. We are someone to so many people. When we lose a role, we can find ourselves teetering on the edge of losing our true identity.

During this period of my life, I needed to shift back to a place where I found my identity in Jesus Christ regularly. At times I needed someone else to speak truth into me, and other times the Spirit spoke God's truth through Scripture.

These moments in life are all too common for us. What we thought we must have in order to live is sometimes taken away. We ask ourselves who are we after such loss.

Satan wanted me to believe my identity as a sister could not be separated from my identity as God's cherished child, and that I could not exist without this role in my life. Satan is the father of lies — deceptive, and when we listen, we don't always recognize they are not the truth.

Has your role in life changed? \_\_\_\_\_

What lies grip you and your life by their deception? \_\_\_\_\_

How do such lies imprison? \_\_\_\_\_

What holds you back from living life in such a way that you forget who you are or whose you are? \_\_\_\_\_

Let's discover what God tells us about shifting from a place of imprisonment to a place of freedom — shifting from believing lies to believing the truth.

Read **Romans 8:5–17**. Since we are not set right with God by doing good works, what is the motive for shifting to a place of balance in our identity? \_\_\_\_\_

How are we to deal with our sinful nature? (13–14) \_\_\_\_\_

What does Paul mean by being *led by the Spirit* (verse 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might this look in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

According to **Deuteronomy 7:7–9**, why did God choose the Israelites? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think God reminds them of this? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it mean to you: That you are not God's slave, but his child? \_\_\_\_\_

That your identity is in Christ, the one who redeemed you? \_\_\_\_\_

Read **Jeremiah 17:7–8** and **Hebrews 6:7**. If you have worked a garden and are familiar with types of soil, this passage may really resonate. Discuss the difference between soil that retains water and soil that allows water to seep right through it. What does it feel and look like? How do plants grow when planted in each of these types of soil? \_\_\_\_\_

As God's children in need of living water, we want to be like soil that retains water. What would cause God's truth to stay with you, to be "retained"? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need to change any patterns and make some adjustments to be like this type of soil? \_\_\_\_\_

Drought is a reality of life. However, when we soak in God's words, rather than those of the world, what does God promise? \_\_\_\_\_

Read **Philippians 4:4–9**. How can a woman embody the qualities in verses 4–6? \_\_\_\_\_

How do verses 8–9 guide us to capture our thoughts? \_\_\_\_\_

When we know the Lord is near, we know whose we are and who holds us. How does that feel? \_\_\_\_\_

### Grace for You Today

*Now it is God who makes us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Corinthians 1:21–22).*

### Closing Prayer

Lord, enable me to live because of the privilege of being Your child. Let me not identify myself by the standards of this world, nor by my sinful nature. Guide me by Your Spirit to drink the truth of Your Word and let the truth be always evident. Because of Jesus, I am free, and I want to live as the free woman You have made me. Amen.

### Closing

Sing or say together the first and last verses of "What Is the World to Me" (LSB #730; LW #418; TLH #430).